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The Bishop of St. *DAVID's*

SERMON

Preached before the

House of LORDS,

On *January 30. 1735.*

Die Mercurij 4°. Februarij, 1735.

ORder'd by the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, That the Thanks of this House be, and are hereby given to the Lord Bishop of St. DAVID's for the Sermon by him preach'd before their Lordships at the Abbey-Church, *Westminster*, on *Friday* the 30th Day of *January* last; and he is hereby desir'd to cause the same to be printed and published.

W. COOPER, *Clerk Parliamentor*



A
S E R M O N

Preached before the

House of LORDS,

I N T H E

Abbey-Church at *Westminster*,

Upon FRIDAY, *January 30.* 1735.

Being the Day appointed to be kept as the
Day of the Martyrdom of

King *CHARLES* the First.

B Y

NICOLAS Lord Bishop of *St. David's*.

R. Clayton

L O N D O N:

Printed for J. and J. PEMBERTON, at the *Golden
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1 TIM. II. I, 2.

I exhort therefore, that first of all supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men: for kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty.



FROM the words of the text, as well as from divers other passages of scripture, appears the great care the christian religion has taken to promote the peace and quiet of communities. And there is a remarkable harmony in the precepts of the gospel to this purpose, some of them pointing out to us those passions and affections, which are commonly the occasions of disorders and disturbances, and cautioning us against them; others again directing us to that frame and disposition of mind, and those practices, which have a natural tendency to make communities happy.

I shall begin with taking notice of some of the restraints, which our religion has laid upon us to this end. And because so much mischief has been caus'd in the

world by *anger* and resentment, I shall in the first place observe, what restraint our religion has laid upon us with regard to that passion. This is so very strict, that some places of scripture seem at first sight not to admit of it at all. In one place *St. Paul*, speaking to the *Colossians* of the change which he supposes the gospel had made in them, *Now*, says he, *you also put off all these, anger, wrath, malice*, and so on, *Col. iii. 8.* In another place he advises the *Ephesians* in this manner, *Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, be put away from you*, *Eph. iv. 31.* By which expressions the least that can be meant is, that they were not to allow themselves in that kind of *anger*, which is attended with *malice* and *bitterness*. From which passages, and several others to the same purpose, we plainly see, how averse the religion we profess is to our indulging or gratifying this passion. We are discourag'd from it, as much as is possible, and because it is so hard to avoid excesses, are advis'd rather to keep ourselves from it, than to venture ourselves with a passion, which is so difficult to be controul'd and kept within due bounds. It is *St. James's* advice, *James i. 19. Let every man be slow to wrath*, and he assigns this reason for it; *For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God*, i. e. does not the things which God approves. And indeed how is it likely that it should, since *the wrath of man* prompts him to many things which cannot but be displeasing to God? There is great reason, why we should be jealous how we admit a passion, that subjects men to hating one another, which can never be pleasing to that lawgiver, who has made *love the fulfilling of his law*. Again, if we consider it as tempting to revenge, we know that all desires of that kind must be dislik'd by him, who has made it the condition of his forgiving us, that we forgive one another. But most highly displeasing to God must that degree of anger be, which hur-

hurries men to endeavour the ruin and destruction of those with whom they are offended. Of this sort was the unreasonable wrath, which *Saul* had conceiv'd against *David*, when nothing could satisfy him, but the death of an innocent person, who had never done him any hurt, but on the contrary had been very serviceable to him and his people. And such was the rage of *Haman* against *Mordecai*, and the whole nation of the *Jews*, when nothing would content him, but a general slaughter of that people. And it was not owing to any mercy or goodness in them, but to the interposition of God's providence, that, in neither of the cases I have mention'd, their designs were effected. But the melancholy occasion of this day shows us, to what degrees of wickedness men spirited up by wrath and resentment are sometimes permitted to go. Had the authors of the tragedy of this day been stopp'd in their career of fury and malice, or had the bent and purpose of their rage been less cruel than it was, the unparallel'd wickedness of a few had not left so great a stain and infamy not only upon this country in particular, but upon the whole protestant name. That it was a national act cannot with any truth be asserted. The wisdom of the nation, with great justice, has pass'd that censure on this horrid murder, which a crime of so uncommon blackness deserv'd. And if *Jacob* had good reason for his abhorrence of the fact of *Simeon* and *Levi*, whose crime it was, that in their anger they had been guilty of the murder of a private person, how much greater reason, have all men to abhor and detest the fact of this day, when it is consider'd, with what aggravation it was attended, and that the person slain was not only one to whom his murderers could not offer any such violence, without breaking through the greatest restraints they were under from laws both divine and human, but one whom they

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were oblig'd to love, and honour, and reverence, and not to suffer the least hurt to fall upon him from others. Thus tender of him ought they to have been, and had this been their carriage towards him, they had done what was reasonable, and natural, and well becoming their relation to him. But when one considers the prodigious lengths, to which they suffer'd their rage to carry them, and the wicked resolution they came to at last of destroying him, which they scrupl'd not to do openly, and in the face of the sun, and under a pretence of doing justice to their country (when at the same time they were guilty of the greatest insolence that ever was offer'd to a free people) it is not easy to account for this, unless we suppose they did it *ob magnitudinem infamiae*, and to convince all mankind, how far they had got beyond all the ordinary measures of wickedness, and all manner of restraint from a sense of shame. A great instance this of the fatal and pernicious effects of the *wrath of man*, and which plainly demonstrates, how far it is from *the righteousness of God*.

But I proceed to another restraint which our religion has laid upon us, and that is with regard to the *love of the world*; and this takes in the love of every thing, that is apt to kindle and cherish in mens minds avarice and ambition, or that administers fuel for them. St. James observ'd to his brethren, what the true original was of the *wars and fightings* that were amongst them, *Come they not hence, says he, even of your lusts?* James iv. 1. And so it will ever be, that when men allow themselves in the immoderate desires of the honours, and riches, and pleasures of this life, it will be less to be wonder'd at, if they dislike their condition, and in order to obtaining greater degrees of wealth and affluence, are but too ready to go into such measures, as they would otherwise have thought it right to avoid.

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Another restraint of the gospel of great use to society is, the check it puts upon *self-love*. Against this the scripture has not only caution'd us, but it has rank'd *lovers of their own selves* with those, who *have a form of godliness*, but have nothing of its *power*. And nothing surely can happen more mischievous to communities of men, and from which greater evils may be apprehended, than when any will suffer themselves to separate their private interest from that of the publick, and can think it right to pursue the former to the prejudice of the latter.

And when men are once become so much masters of themselves, that they will never be unduly influenc'd by anger or resentment, when they do not feel in themselves those inordinate desires which are commonly the causes of contention and strife, when they have nothing of that self-love which is apt to interfere with the good of society, they are arriv'd to a considerable degree in the social virtues, and are that sort of persons, which all communities must ever desire may abound amongst them.

Nor is this all. The religion of the gospel expressly requires, that men should be *content*, and *humble*, and *patient*, that they *study to be quiet*, that they *follow after the things that make for peace*, and, which must strongly incline and dispose them to all this, that they *love one another*.

But in nothing does it more appear, how well our religion is adapted to promote the quiet and happiness of society, than in the concern it expresses for civil government.

Our Saviour himself was a great instance of submission to it. He was at the expence of a miracle to enable himself to pay the tribute that was demanded of him. His answer to those who enquir'd of him concerning the lawfulness of paying tribute was, that they ought to render

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to *Cæsar* the things that were *Cæsar's*. He acknowledg'd the power of *Pilate* to be from God. But upon ^{no} occasion does he make a plainer declaration of the necessity of submitting to publick authority, than when *the multitude came from the chief priests and elders of the people* to seize him in order to putting him to death. In that critical conjuncture, *St. Peter*, who saw what their wicked purposes were, and that they meant to destroy him, out of his zeal for his master's service, drew his sword, and struck a servant of the high-priest, and smote off his ear, and without doubt was ready to do every thing farther in defence of so good a master. But what was it, that our Lord said to him on that occasion? *Put up thy sword into his place.* Far from approving his mistaken zeal, he condemns it, and would not suffer him to proceed, and withal gives him a reason of the greatest weight against it, by telling him, that *all that take the sword, shall perish by the sword*, i. e. that legal authority would support itself against all opposers, and had a right to do so.

Agreeable to this doctrine of our Saviour was the constant tenor of that of his apostles. Amongst the new converts, some of them, who came over from *Judaism*, and ever had a dislike to the *Roman* governors, might, it is likely, retain something of their old prejudice against all governors whatsoever, who were strangers, and not of their own nation; and this might render them less ready to pay that obedience to those who were set over them, than it was their duty to pay. In an affair of so great importance, the apostles seem to have taken much pains in order to set them right. And therefore we find them frequently exhorting the christians of those times *to be subject to the higher powers, to submit themselves to every ordinance of man, to be subject to principalities and powers, to render to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour*, and to all this they oblige

oblige christians *not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.*

And here in the text men are directed by the apostle to a duty, which in the first place is very fit in itself to be perform'd, as it is a proper acknowledgment of the high sovereignty of God over all the kingdoms of the earth, and which besides manifestly inclines men both to be quiet themselves under government, and to promote quietness in others. He *exhorts that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, and in particular for kings, and for all that are in authority, that so communities may be undisturb'd, and every one enjoy the comforts of life in peace and tranquillity.* Inward peace and satisfaction of mind men may expect from a strict adherence to the duties of religion, but there is likewise great happiness in outward peace, in living in quiet times, and in being undisturb'd in that very religion, which is the natural source of so much joy, and this can never be compass'd, unless men are protected from those violences and injuries, which it is the great end and intent of government to keep off. Therefore the apostle *exhorts them to pray for kings, and all that are in authority, that they may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty.* In which words of the apostle *two things* are observable,

Ist, The end of government, that men may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty.

IIly, The duty of subjects to pray for their governors.

I. As to the end of government; governors are describ'd in some places of scripture, as *judging, or doing justice and judgment, 1 Kings x. 9. Jer. xxii. 15.* in other places as *ministers of God for our good, as terrors to evil works, as revengers to execute wrath upon them that do evil, Rom. xiii.*

3, 4. And considering how many intolerable violences the passions of men would put them upon, unless there were a restraint of this kind, that might serve both as a curb to the unreasonable and unjust, and as a protection to others against them, there could be no such thing as living in society, nor could communities of men subsist. The best laws imaginable, and contriv'd with the greatest wisdom, had been but a very imperfect provision for publick peace and tranquillity, if in every community there were not those, whose particular business and office it was to give them life, and to see that they have their due effect. It is not to be suppos'd, but that in the numbers of particular persons, of which society consists, there will be some, who will not be hindred merely by the influences of reason and conscience from doing to others great and intolerable injuries for their own profit and advantage, and should such persons be under no more restraint from without, than they are from their own minds, no one could be secure either as to life or property. The larger mens possessions were, they would be but the stronger invitations to rapin and plunder, and the owners by their means be only expos'd to greater injuries than others. This had been too great an inconvenience for any to live under, and no society could ever have lasted, in which some effectual remedy had not been provided against it. This remedy in every country is the government of that country, and is as necessary for the welfare of society, as society itself is for that of individuals. And, suitably to the excellent nature of it, we find it distinguish'd in scripture with the name of the *ordinance of God*, as being a thing not only agreeable to his will, but what he expects all due deference should be paid to, and disobedience to which he has himself remarkably punish'd, as in the case of *Corah* and his company. God made man for society, and therefore he intended he should live under government. If we

consult our natures, nothing is more plain than this. God has implanted in us strong desires of society, and the enjoyment of it is one of the greatest pleasures of life. He has so order'd it, that we greatly stand in need one of another. All these things consider'd, it cannot be doubted but that government has God for its author, that he is pleas'd when the great ends of government are answer'd, and displeas'd with the contrary. In every government, be the form of it what it will, be the power lodg'd in one person or more, the end of it is still the same, the administration of justice, the protection of the innocent, and the punishment of evil doers. That this should take place is the interest of every man, who lives under it. No man would chuse, that, either as to his person or property, he should be subject to violence or oppression. Every one in his turn is glad to reap the benefit of good laws, and would be sorry not to be under the shield of that authority, which is to carry them into execution. It is but natural for every man to desire to sit undisturb'd *under his own vine, and under his own fig-tree.* And from this manifest interest of all men does the apostle argue, when he exhorts them to *pray* for governors, namely, that under them *they may lead quiet and peaceable lives, in all godliness and honesty.* I come now to the other thing I observ'd in the text, and that is

II. The duty of subjects to *pray* for their governors. And if there were nothing else implied in government, than what I have been speaking of, that judgment and justice be equally and duly administred, that were reason enough why subjects should desire that their governors might have the divine assistance therein. But when we consider the large compass and extent of the business of government, and the great variety of things of a publick nature which are to be order'd by princes, and in the
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good or ill ordering of which the publick is so much concern'd, whether it be in relation to the care of things here at home, or of such matters abroad, in which their subjects cannot but apprehend themselves to be interested, it must be own'd that the station of princes has great difficulties attending it, and it cannot but be thought highly reasonable, that persons, who have so great an interest in the success of the measures of those who govern them as subjects have, should be intercessors to God for them. If their business be of so arduous and momentous a nature, and which requires more than ordinary assistances, what help is so proper to be desir'd for them, as that of infinite wisdom to direct them? And how great reasons have subjects to be petitioners in their behalf?

Of this the primitive christians had a due sense, as appears by the accounts, which the earliest writers give us of them. They did not sacrifice to their emperors as Gods, because they could consider them no otherwise than as men; and tho' they were to be honour'd, yet this they knew was a very improper way of honouring them. But they did that which was of greater service to them, they offer'd the christian sacrifice of prayers and intercessions in their behalf, and were suitors with him, on whom the prosperity of princes and states depends, that he would send down his blessings on them. The prayers of the christians attended them in their wars, when they fought with their enemies in the field; and the same prayers were offer'd, that their government might be happy and successful at home.

This regard did the first christians pay even to heathen governors, and are not christian ones entitl'd at least to an equal regard from their subjects? When we consider our own constitution in particular, in which the interest of the prince is so much interwoven with that of the people, can we think it right either to omit the duty directed

rected in the text of *praying* for princes, or to be without that affection for them, that concern for their honour and dignity, and that hearty desire of the good success of their government, that the offering up of *prayers* in their behalf ever supposes?

Had such a disposition as this prevail'd more in those times which brought on the horrid fact of this day, many of the fatal steps that led to it had never been taken; the character of the king had not been treated with so little respect; the many calumnies and libels against him had never been spread with so much industry to poison the minds of his people, and to give them ill impressions concerning him; nor had they been receiv'd with so much readiness as they were; things had taken a different turn, more favourable to the true interests both of the king and his people, and had not ended as they did, in the overthrow of the constitution, as well as the destruction of the king; instead of this, when grievances had been complain'd of and represented, and that particular redress of them that was desir'd had been obtain'd, all the uneasiness caus'd by them had ceas'd of course, and the king's manifest willingness to make the minds of his subjects easy had had its due effect in deservedly endearing him to them. Had nothing been in view but the publick good, and the security of the rights of the subject, and had no desires but of that kind entred into the measures of those days, it could not but be seen by what had been granted, that enough had been done to remove all their fears and apprehensions real or imaginary. But if, in any who had the management of those transactions, other passions (which were not to be nam'd nor own'd) were to be gratified, such as a rooted hatred of the person of the king, and a restless desire to change the government of their country, it could be no wonder to find them acting as they did, nor to see things brought to that pass at last,

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Multa concedendo, nihil aliud effecerat, quam ut acrius exposcerent, quæ sciebant negaturum.
Tac. Hist.
 l. 4. c. 19.

that the king's case was become the same with that of *Hordeonius*, in the historian, *all that he gain'd by his concessions, was only their insisting with greater fierceness upon such things, as they well knew he would refuse them.*

From these things it was but too plain, that there were some in those days, who were rather averse to a reconciliation than desirous of it. In the mean time how great was their unhappiness, who, without meaning either the destruction of the king, or the ruin of the constitution, had any ways contributed to make persons of such a disposition so powerful? It was now too late to examine the fair pretences of artful and designing men, and whether they went upon the good motives they profess'd or no. If it appear'd in the end, that the power, which they had help'd them to, was us'd to serve private ends, and to gratify private resentments, they had great reason to be sorry for having lodg'd it in such hands.

What I shall observe of the temper of too many of those times is, how very far it was, from that commendable disposition in subjects, that love of peace, that hearty desire of the publick tranquillity, and of the happiness of their fellow-subjects, which the exhortation in the text supposes.

Agreeable to what the apostle exhorts in the text concerning *praying for all men and for princes* is that direction of God to the *Jews* in the book of *Jeremy*, where they are commanded *to seek the peace of the city, to which they had been carried away captives, and to pray unto the Lord for it*, Jer. xxix. 7. And the reason, with which God enforces this command, is the same with that in the text, *For in the peace thereof ye shall have peace.* Their condition at *Babylon* was no better than that of captives and exiles, yet, by their present situation, they were in some respects one and the same people with the inhabitants of that city, and as such could not but participate of all the good or evil

evil that befel them. Were plagues, or famines, or intestine divisions to make that city unhappy, the *Jews* who were amongst them must have born their share in those miseries. And on the other side, in the prosperity of that city, in the healthfulness of their seasons, in their plenty and abundance, in the calm and quiet of their government, the *Jews*, as station'd amongst them, must have found their account, and therefore were they to *pray for the peace* of that city.

And here it is obvious to observe, that all the happiness, which the return of their prayers could bring down upon them, was only the happiness of poor captives, and such as a people was capable of, who had been forc'd from their native country, and liv'd at that time in an abject state of dependance on their conquerors.

But what is this to the incomparably greater interest which a free people, like ourselves, have in the publick peace and tranquillity? What great blessings in our case are depending upon it? And how inexcusable should we be, should we not be solicitous, not only by our prayers, but by all other possible means, to engage God's providence in our favour?

The confusions which this day brings to mind must be a convincing argument to us of the instability of all human affairs. We see plainly that a concurrence of circumstances once happen'd, when our own excellent form of government was not able to support itself. And this should naturally lead us to seek that security from God's protection of us and care over us, which can be had from nothing else.

We were at that time very safe from every foreign enemy, when God, for our sins, left us to the fatal consequences of our unnatural heats and animosities at home. *Through the wrath of God, to use the expression of the prophet, was the land darkned, and the people was as the*

fuel of the fire. So universal was the havock which the spirit of discord had made, that its contagion had reach'd all places. Neither the court, nor the country, nor the senate, nor the church was free from the effects of it. And when every thing was so dispos'd, as it was, for a civil war, it was but too likely, that it should break out at last in the manner it did, and that the miseries that attended it should ensue. God had doubtless been greatly displeas'd with the sins of both parties, and therefore were all the means, that had been us'd to prevent this so great a calamity, without success. To this it was owing that, in those days of contention, neither the wisdom of the wise, nor the laudable endeavours of the good men of that age could sooner put an end to those distractions. Had the grievances, which had occasion'd the heart-burnings of those times, been continued, had those who were made uneasy by them had no opportunity of representing them, or, upon a representation, had no redress ensued; it had not been so hard to assign the cause, why the spirit of discord rag'd for so long a time, and in so high a degree. For it must be own'd that in the beginning of those times the necessities, in which the king found himself, had occasion'd some extraordinary steps to be taken, and had no attention been paid to the complaints of those who were interested in the consequences of them, the continuance of their uneasiness had not been a thing to be wonder'd at. But since the reverse of this was true, and so many things had been consented to, in order to remove all the apprehensions, that the most jealous persons could have of the regal power; since, to quiet the minds of the uneasy, the king had divested himself of some of the choicest flowers of his crown, and had in a manner unking'd himself to convince all mankind of the sincere disposition he had to peace; when we reflect, that, after all this, things should not be nearer to a reconciliation than they were before, what

what can we say to account for this, but that when means so likely to obtain publick peace miscarried, it was a sign that providence was determin'd to punish a guilty people, and that, for that reason, *the things, that belong'd to their peace, were hid from their eyes?* For this cause it was, that God permitted an handful of men to destroy their legal sovereign, and with him the ancient government of their country, and for divers years together to carry on an unnatural war against the successor to the crown.

This must be a very affecting instance to show us, how much the quiet and happiness of kingdoms depends upon God; so that we may truly say of nations with *Elibu*, in the book of *Job*, *When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him?* Job xxxiv. 29.

And now should not this consideration make us very careful how we incur his displeasure? No one can tell how long God will bear with any people, nor to what degree of guilt he will suffer them to go, before he proceeds to punish them. This is one of the hidden things of God, and one of those secrets of providence which we cannot know. But in the mean time how dangerous should we think it to make any approaches towards that condition, that may be the filling up our iniquities, and making us ripe for his vengeance? The sins of former times, the innocent blood in particular, that was shed on this day, and for which we humble ourselves before God at this time, are like so many judgments hanging over our heads, and to those should we add fresh provocations, who can tell in what such a conduct may end?

But it is besides to be remember'd, that God has favour'd us with great mercies, which must be plac'd to our account, since the time that he afflicted us. And they are such as have deserv'd more than ordinary returns of gratitude and obedience. One of them was restoring to

us our ancient constitution both in church and state, after the several years of confusion that had passed over our heads, when he was pleas'd to bend the hearts of the people as the heart of one man, and induc'd them to bring back to the throne of his ancestors a son of that prince who was murder'd as on this day. Nor is that other deliverance ever to be forgotten, which God vouchsaf'd us some years after, when, by the means of our great deliverer *K. William*, he rescued us from two evils, that a free and protestant people can never too much guard against, popery and arbitrary power. The blessings of both deliverances may well be mention'd together, since by each of them we found ourselves restor'd to our ancient government, our civil and religious rights, and to all the benefits of our happy constitution, upon which we cannot set too great a value. And when we consider, what God has done for us, in order to perpetuate these blessings to us, in establishing the protestant succession to the crown of these realms, we can look on this no otherwise than as an eminent standing pledge of his kindness for these kingdoms. These are very uncommon marks of the goodness of God towards us. And what are the returns we have made him? Does our gratitude to him appear in that general concern for the honour of God, that sober and serious sense of religion, that might be expected? Is there all that piety and devotion, and all that virtue, righteousness, and charity, that should be in a people whom God has so highly favour'd? Or rather have we not reason to be alarm'd with the open prophaness, and infidelity, and the great and visible want of religion in these times?

One thing there is that ever will have a peculiar tendency to defeat all the prayers that are made, and all the endeavours that are us'd, for publick peace and quiet, and the happiness which depends upon it, and that is,

want of due harmony and agreement amongst ourselves.

Since the time that we of this country shook off the intolerable yoke of the church of *Rome*, they have ever look'd with an envious eye upon a nation, whom they consider'd as the head of the protestant interest, and have ever been forming designs, how they might enslave us again. This point they have constantly had in view, and from nothing have they been more apt to flatter themselves with hopes of success, than from the quarrels and animosities, that have at any time prevail'd amongst us. It help'd no doubt not a little to inflame matters in those times of uneasiness, that there were those who did not scruple to represent the king as a papist, and the religion of our church as popery, in which they were certainly very unjust to both ; but in the mean time they did what the common enemy was not sorry to find done. It is but too common a thing in all disputes whatsoever, when parties run high, for those of both sides to entertain wrong notions of one another. Thus in the late times many of one side look'd on all who pass'd for *Arminians*, as persons who intended to introduce popery, and many of the other believ'd all in any of the *Calvinist* notions to be enemies to the government and discipline of the church ; neither of which ways of thinking was true : and the consequence of these mistakes was, that they did but sharpen one party so much the more against the other.

But for a compleat view of the mischievous effects of heats and animosities, of all kinds whatsoever, when carried to a great height, we need only look back to those times.

As to the tragedy of this day, it is well known to what sort of writers the actors of it were beholden for the principles they went upon, when they imbru'd their hands in the blood of their sovereign.

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This they did, as the noble historian tells us, at a time when "he had as great a share in the hearts and affections of his subjects, was as much belov'd and esteem'd, and long'd for by the people in general of the three nations, as any of his predecessors had ever been." And it is but doing him justice to say, that if such personal qualities, as devotion and piety, and temperance and chastity, and knowledge, could render either a prince or a private person amiable, *K. Charles the first* had all these in so great a degree, that he could not fail of being highly valued and esteem'd for them. His affection for the national church was too great for the enemies of our constitution ever to forgive, and, for that reason, should be thought too great ever to be forgotten by its friends.

And it is no more than being just to the nation as well as to the king to observe, that in order to open the way to his destruction, his enemies found it first necessary to overturn, as it were, the very being of parliaments, by absolutely hindring one of the houses, which had unanimously refus'd to join with them, from meeting, and by using violence that none might sit in the other, but such as they knew would favour their designs. Those, who were truly the representatives of the people, had voted the king's answer, at the last treaty, to be a good ground for peace; and they who voted afterwards the contrary, and by that means were the authors of the violence of this day, being so small a part of the house as they were, could not be said, upon the exclusion of others, to be the representatives of the people.

The horrid fact itself was a great wound to religion, not only as it was done by those who call'd themselves christians, but as it was pretended to be done out of a zeal for religion. Whatever they might persuade others, (as it was necessary so black a crime should have some plausible colour put upon it) could they ever persuade themselves,

selves, that what they did was agreeable to the gospel? Could the mild and gentle spirit of the religion of Christ, which (as I have shew'd in this discourse) has a quite contrary tendency, ever lead men to sedition or rebellion, or put them on so unnatural a murder as was that of this day?

For this so great crime are we endeavouring by our present humiliation to avert the wrath of God. By the scripture we see, how very offensive the sin of murder is to God. If a common person was slain in the land, and the author of the fact was not known, the people of the city near whom it was done, were, according to the law given to the *Jews*, to make a publick expiation for it. But the execrable fact of this day was attended with many aggravations. One of the most unjustifiable acts of violence that ever was committed was done in an open and solemn manner, under a pretence of authority and justice, and the murder was no less than that of a prince by the hands of his own subjects. We of the present age are members of the same community, and tho' we could not be personally concern'd in the sin, yet, as our land has been defil'd with blood, it is both our duty and interest to do all we can to expiate it.

And, to do this more effectually, we cannot be too careful to cherish in our minds that love of peace, that desire of the publick good, which the exhortation in the text supposes. The want of a dutiful regard to government in one age cannot in a more proper way be declar'd against in another, than by a carriage, which is the reverse of that of former times. Nor can a detestation of the seditious principles and turbulent practices, which then prevail'd, be express'd at this day in a better manner, than in a steady and affectionate zeal for the gracious Prince, who now reigns over us.

It is under the happy influences of his good and just government, that we find ourselves in full possession of our liberties,

liberties, that every one is protected in his rights and privileges, and that, without any *complaining in our streets*, we all of us enjoy the invaluable benefit of our laws. A wise and discerning people will ever be sensible of these blessings, and set that high value on them which they deserve. And of course they should be careful to avoid all manner of steps, that may have any kind of tendency to publick disturbances, and should ever look upon unanimity amongst themselves, as one of the main things, on which depends their strength and security.

Now may God, who alone can turn the hearts of men as he pleases, give us this temper, which is so necessary for our happiness; and as by his goodness to us, we have enjoy'd of late quiet and repose, whilst so great a part of *Europe* felt the terrible effects of war and bloodshed, so through the same good hand of our God upon us, may we every day become a people still more thoroughly united amongst ourselves. May his Majesty's unwearied endeavours for the good of these realms, be ever crown'd with success, and may he always find those returns from us, that are due to a vigilant, and kind, and gracious Prince from an obedient and affectionate people.

E N D